

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION OES-06

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S E C R E T TEHRAN 1437

VIENNA FOR USMISSION TO INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: TGEN, TECH, ENRG, IR
SUBJ: GOI/AEOI PLANS FOR ISFAHAN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY CENTER,
ENTEC

REF: (A) TEHRAN 1232, (B) 76 TEHRAN A-110

REFAIR A-110 GAVE A GENERAL, PRELIMINARY REPORT ON ENTEC. ALSO IN
REFTEL, EMBASSY REPORTED ON PRESS CONFERENCE, FEB. 6, DURING WHICH
DR. AKBAR ETEMAD, PRESIDENT, AEOI STATED THAT IRAN HAD ABANDONED
PLANS FOR A DOMESTIC NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING FACILITY. IN THIS
CONTEXT, AN UPDATE REPORT CAN NOW BE MADE DERIVING FROM ONE WEEK
MEETINGS WITH (CONCLUDED FEB. 8) KEY AEOI OFFICIALS, DURING COURSE
OF VALUABLE VISIT OF OAK RIDGE TEAM (DR. ZUCKER, DR. TAUGER, AND
DR. JOHNSON, ORNL/ORAU). THE FOLLOWING FACTS WERE OBTAINED AND
OBSERVED BY SITE VISIT OF ORNL TEAM AS WELL AS VIEWS OF MODELS AND
LAB DESIGNS BY TEAM AND EMBASSY SCIENCE ATTACHE:

1. AS PART OF THE ENTEC COMPLEX (DESIGNED BY THE FRENCH-
TECHNICATOME) SURVEYS ARE NOW BEING MADE, AS WELL AS PRELIMINARY
CONSTRUCTION. A LARGE HOT LAB FACILITY IS ALSO PLANNED.

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2. THE ENTEC FACILITY (WHICH WILL BE THE THE NATIONAL NUCLEAR R & D
CENTER OF IRAN) IS LOCATED 12 KM--APPROXIMATELY EAST--OF ISFAHAN,
BETWEEN TWO MOUNTAINS. FYI--ONE MEMBER OF THE ORNL TEAM COM-
MENTED ON THE SIMILARITY OF THIS LOCATION TO THE U.S. SANDIA
WEAPONS LABORATORY LOCATION.

3. THE ENTEC LAB, WHICH INCLUDES SOME 15 SEPARATE BUILDINGS IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION, AND START OF OPERATION, FOUR YEARS FROM NOW.

4. SOME SPECIFICATIONS OF THIS UNUSUALLY LARGE FACILITY ARE AS FOLLOWS: (A) THE MAIN CANYON WILL BE ABOUT 550 FEET LONG AND 60 FEET WIDE, WHICH CORRESPONDS TO AN AREA, FOR THAT WING OF THE "H" OF 33,000 SQUARE FEET; AND, (B) THE HEIGHT IS EQUIVALENT TO 3 STORIES, VERTICAL DIMENSION.

5. THE OAK RIDGE TEAM BELIEVES THAT THE UNUSUALLY LARGE SIZE OF THE PLANNED FACILITY MAKES IT THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE TO PRODUCE WEAPONS-GRADE MATERIAL (PLUTONIUM). IT CANNOT NOW BE STATED CATEGORICALLY, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH MATERIAL WILL IN FACT BE PRODUCED; THE TEAM MEMBERS
TED THAT THE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE FACILITY CANNOT BE DEFINITELY DETERMINED FROM ITS DIMENSIONS. DEPENDING UPON WHAT PROCESSING EQUIPMENT IS PUT INSIDE OF THE HOT LAB, THE ENTEC FACILITY MIGHT EQUALLY HAVE THE CAPACITY OF PRODUCING MIXED OXIDE APPROPRIATE FOR REACTOR CORES. AEOI CONTEMPLATES WHAT AMOUNTS TO A FULL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE FOR ENTEC--FUEL FABRICATION, REPROCESSING AND WASTE DISPOSAL--BUT ONLY ON PILOT PLANT SCALE. THE OAK RIDGE TEAM COULD ONLY CONCLUDE THAT THE ENTEC FACILITY "BEARS WATCHING."
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